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Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations agencies and funds

Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations system entities

Draft report

I. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

1. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held an in-depth dialogue with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on 22 May 2009 as part of its new working methods during the eighth session. The Permanent Forum welcomed the participation of OHCHR and expressed its appreciation for the detailed and informative report presented by the Office on its activities in support of indigenous peoples (E/C.19/2009/3/Add.2).[1]

2. The Permanent Forum posed questions to OHCHR addressing a number of issues, including the following:

(a) The roles of OHCHR and the Permanent Forum in the light of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

(b) How to improve coordination between OHCHR and the secretariat of the Permanent Forum and ensure that work related to the three United Nations mandates devoted to indigenous peoples (the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) is pursued in a complementary fashion;

(c) The inclusion of indigenous peoples' concerns in the universal periodic review process and the policy frameworks of United Nations treaty monitoring bodies;

[1] For an extensive summary of the in-depth dialogue between the Permanent Forum and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, see http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/hr4987.doc.htm.

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(d) The capacity-training initiatives of OHCHR, as well as thematic research and reports;

(e) OHCHR contributions to inter-agency efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples and mainstream their issues within the United Nations system;

(f) Communication between OHCHR and indigenous representatives at headquarters and in the field;

(g) The prioritization of indigenous peoples within the total work programme of OHCHR;

(h) An assessment of the impact of Permanent Forum recommendations on OHCHR activities, as well as the effectiveness of such recommendations;

(i) OHCHR engagement with national human rights institutions.

Observations on the dialogue

3. The Permanent Forum commends the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the fruitful in-depth dialogue concerning the present work of OHCHR in the field of indigenous peoples' issues as well as the assistance the Office could provide for the activities of the Forum in future.

4. The Permanent Forum commends OHCHR for its commitment to advancing the human rights of indigenous peoples through its promotion of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, its regional and country presence, the hands-on training that it provides to United Nations staff and its Indigenous Fellowship Programme. Furthermore, OHCHR provides support in the area of indigenous peoples' issues through the servicing of human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which has paid close attention to indigenous peoples, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which recently addressed the situation of indigenous children in one of its general comments.

5. The Permanent Forum notes with appreciation the fact that, during 2009, OHCHR increased the allocation of its resources devoted to the protection of indigenous peoples, and urges further increases in the future.

6. The Permanent Forum notes that numerous indigenous organizations attend the annual sessions of the Permanent Forum and the Expert Mechanism, at which specific allegations of human rights violations are often made. The Permanent Forum, the Expert Mechanism and the Special Rapporteur could benefit from working together to develop measures to channel such allegations to the appropriate human rights mechanisms, including by supporting training by OHCHR on the use of such mechanisms.

7. The Permanent Forum and OHCHR have the same duty to promote respect for the full application of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and follow up on the effectiveness of the Declaration in accordance with article 42 of the Declaration. The Permanent Forum and OHCHR should, within their capacities, work towards transforming the Declaration in its entirety into living law.

Concluding recommendations

8. The Permanent Forum recommends that OHCHR aspire to adapt its organizational structures to the post-Declaration era by strengthening secretariat structures devoted to indigenous peoples' issues.

9. The Permanent Forum recommends that OHCHR continue to contribute to strengthening the working relations between the treaty bodies and the three United Nations mechanisms which have specific mandates to address indigenous peoples' issues in order to enhance compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In this regard, OHCHR could facilitate the participation of the Chairperson of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum at the next annual meeting of the chairpersons of the treaty bodies.

10. The Permanent Forum recommends that the annual report of OHCHR to the Permanent Forum provide a summary of relevant reports, decisions and recommendations of the Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies and special procedures, as well as the universal periodic review working group, United Nations treaty bodies and other relevant United Nations reports and conferences.

11. The Permanent Forum commends OHCHR for conducting training session on the rights of indigenous peoples for its staff in a number of Asian and African countries. The Permanent Forum recommends that OHCHR continue to expand such training and capacity-building efforts for its staff, both at headquarters and in country teams in all regions.

12. The Permanent Forum recommends that OHCHR produce a periodic electronic bulletin on relevant activities regarding the rights of indigenous peoples, including decisions and observations by United Nations human rights mechanisms regarding States under review, and its activities at the regional or local levels and other events.

13. The Permanent Forum recommends that OHCHR take a leading role in ensuring that United Nations country teams undertake their policies or programmes affecting indigenous peoples in cooperation with indigenous peoples' representatives and organizations.

II. International Fund for Agricultural Development

14. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues expresses its appreciation to and congratulates the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for the constructive dialogue between the delegation of IFAD and the Permanent Forum held on 26 May 2009. The Permanent Forum also expresses its appreciation for the detailed and informative report presented by IFAD on its activities specifically related to indigenous issues (E/C.10/2009/3/Add.6).[2]

[2] For an extensive summary of the in-depth dialogue between the Permanent Forum and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, see http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/hr4987.doc.htm.

15. Since the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, IFAD has been a valuable partner within the framework of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and has supported the work of the Forum, including its efforts towards the establishment of indicators relevant to indigenous peoples. Focusing on agriculture and rural development, IFAD has provided a significant contribution to the reduction of poverty among rural indigenous peoples, for whom the issue of land rights, territory and agricultural production is of vital interest.

Observations on the dialogue

16. The Permanent Forum congratulates IFAD for its ongoing initiative to develop an institutional policy on engaging with indigenous peoples and supports the approval of the policy by the Executive Board of IFAD. That initiative is a positive example to be followed by United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, and conforms with the repeated call of the Permanent Forum to agencies to adopt policies on indigenous peoples' issues.

17. The Permanent Forum takes note with appreciation of the Fund's approach with regard to incorporating the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People in its programmes and projects at both the institutional-policy and operational levels through its country-level operative planning tools. The Permanent Forum acknowledges and appreciates the participatory and consultative approach taken in the development of the policy. The Permanent Forum is concerned, however, about the lack of mechanisms for addressing problems relating to the application of the policy in future.

18. The Permanent Forum recognizes the various existing situations regarding the issue of the self-recognition of African indigenous peoples. During the in-depth dialogue, Member States and the Permanent Forum recognized the important work of IFAD in the region and urged it to strengthen its focus on indigenous issues in Africa as it has done in other regions by applying a pragmatic approach.

Concluding recommendations

19. The Permanent Forum takes note of the determination if IFAD — for which it congratulates the Fund — to identify indigenous peoples as a specific target group within the agency's strategic framework, which, in a significant way, has consolidated and legitimized indigenous peoples' issues in its work with its partners, other organizations and States. The Permanent Forum finds that identifying indigenous peoples as a specific target group is a standard-setting approach, to be duplicated by the United Nations and other international agencies. It is recommended that IFAD maintain its strong focus on indigenous peoples' issues in the formulation of the new institutional strategic framework, which is due to commence soon.

20. The gaps and challenges facing IFAD' in terms of its commitment to indigenous peoples' issues include the mainstreaming of the new institutional policy on engaging with indigenous peoples at all levels of the organization globally, regionally and nationally. The Permanent Forum recommends that institutional mechanisms be established so as to secure the process of mainstreaming within the agency.

21. The Permanent Forum takes note of the difficulties mentioned in the IFAD report and during the in-depth dialogue regarding engagement with partners whose approach may not be favourable to indigenous issues. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has been acknowledged by IFAD as an important instrument to promote a strong focus on indigenous peoples with its partners. The Permanent Forum recommends that IFAD use the Declaration actively and engage in a constructive dialogue regarding indigenous peoples' issues, even if its partners demonstrate a lack of interest or a less-than-positive attitude.

22. The Permanent Forum acknowledges the Fund's country strategic opportunities programmes as an important instrument for actively focusing on indigenous issues at the national level. The Permanent Forum recommends that IFAD construct mechanisms to secure the complementary use of the national operative planning instruments and the new institutional policy on engaging with indigenous peoples. The alignment of those instruments with the future institutional policy on indigenous issues is important for the mainstreaming of indigenous peoples' issues within IFAD.

23. The Permanent Forum recommends that IFAD develop a stronger focus on issues relating to land and territory and actively promote indigenous peoples' rights to land.

24. As part of the active engagement of IFAD with indigenous peoples' issues, the Permanent Forum recommends that the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility be incorporated into the organization's general budget so as to guarantee sustainability and the transfer of good practices and lessons learned within IFAD programmes and projects. The Permanent Forum also recommends that the facility extend its funding directly to indigenous peoples' organizations. Support for indigenous peoples' organizations should have as its point of departure the co-administration and co-implementation of the projects.

25. The Permanent Forum recommends that when planning, preparing and implementing its programmes and projects, IFAD conduct the necessary investigations so as to ensure that the particularities and cultural sensitivities of indigenous peoples involved in and affected by the programmes and projects are taken into account. The Permanent Forum underlines the fact that indigenous peoples are to be engaged as an active and equal partner in all processes and phases of programmers and projects.

III. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

26. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held its in-depth dialogue with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on 22 May 2009. The in-depth dialogue was the first of its kind, and the Permanent Forum welcomes the participation of FAO and expresses its appreciation for the detailed report submitted by the organization (E/C.19/2009/3/Add. 3).[3]

27. FAO is a valuable partner of the Permanent Forum and an active participant in the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. FAO has been a leading

[3] For a detailed narrative of the in-depth dialogue, see the summary prepared by the Department of Public Information (HR/4986), available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/hr4986.doc.htm.

proponent of supporting indigenous peoples in the field of communication for development.

Observations on the dialogue

28. The Permanent Forum welcomes the continued work of FAO on issues related to food security and nutrition. FAO efforts in the area of biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resources management are also a valuable contribution, since the survival strategies and food security of many indigenous peoples are contingent upon the availability of and access to a healthy environment. Such initiatives demonstrate the organization's increasing commitment to and willingness to working with indigenous peoples as partners or as active agents in change.

29. The Permanent Forum takes note of the information contained in the FAO report to the Forum and provided during the comprehensive dialogue, and appreciates FAO fieldwork, research and policy initiatives regarding indigenous peoples' issues. The Permanent Forum notes in particular the commitment of a considerable number of FAO staff to indigenous issues, both in the field and at headquarters.

30. At the same time, the Permanent Forum takes note of the fact that FAO does not have a specific mandate to work on indigenous peoples' issues or a specific unit responsible for dealing specifically with such issues. To date, issues relating to indigenous peoples have not been dealt with on a systematic basis at FAO, and related projects are frequently dependent on the goodwill and determination of individual staff members of the organization. FAO is not specifically mandated to work with indigenous peoples; its primary mandate is to work with the rural poor. However, indigenous peoples constitute a disproportionately high number of the world's rural poor. Furthermore, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples clearly provides a mandate to all United Nations agencies to work specifically on indigenous peoples' issues.

31. In this respect, the Permanent Forum encourages countries members of FAO to push for more concerted action on this front. The absence of a specific mandate evidently causes some resistance within FAO itself — a resistance which impedes an area of work to which FAO could bring great benefits.

32. The approval of an FAO policy on indigenous peoples' issues would allow the organization to address indigenous issues in a more consistent and committed way. Although the process of developing such a policy began some time ago, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has given a push to current efforts to complete that endeavour. Articles 41 and 42 of the Declaration clearly provide a mandate to all United Nations agencies to work specifically on indigenous peoples' issues, and the Forum is pleased to hear that these will be taken seriously at FAO.

33. Mainstreaming indigenous issues in the work of FAO will undoubtedly take time. It is an effort that needs to be introduced gradually and that will have to proceed step by step. The Permanent Forum welcomes the FAO proposal that the adoption of the policy be followed by the development of an operational strategy and training programme to integrate greater awareness of indigenous issues into the organization overall and construct a feasible way forward.

34. The Permanent Forum supports the request of indigenous peoples to be more involved in FAO work. Although the primary recipients of FAO assistance are Governments, the suggestion that indigenous representatives be called upon to provide special advice and guidance is a welcome one which could set an important example. The World Summit on Food Security, which will take place at FAO later this year, will offer a good opportunity to begin greater collaborations of that kind. FAO has confirmed that an indigenous peoples' forum will be held as part of the Summit; that event will allow indigenous voices to be heard and will serve to strengthen the momentum to ensure the more systematic consideration of indigenous issues within FAO.

Concluding recommendations

35. The Permanent Forum thus welcomes FAO efforts to develop a policy on indigenous peoples' issues which will help organization staff to work with indigenous peoples in a more systematic way. With a view to strengthening FAO work with indigenous peoples, the Permanent Forum encourages the organization to finalize the draft policy as soon as possible and to submit it to senior management for approval.

36. The Permanent Forum recognizes the initial efforts made by FAO towards the elaboration of a methodological discussion platform to address indigenous peoples' territorial rights. The Permanent Forum recommends that FAO and other interested or partner agencies continue the joint elaboration of the participatory methodology and start using it in the field in order to strengthen the delimitation, titling and negotiated development processes specifically targeting indigenous peoples' needs.

37. The Permanent Forum encourages FAO to continue supporting indigenous peoples' organizations in the field of communication for development. In particular, the Permanent Forum recommends that FAO continue to provide support for indigenous peoples' communication platforms and their activities in the field of participatory territorial development and community-based adaptation to climate change. The Permanent Forum recommends that other United Nations agencies and donors join FAO in that important task and strengthen the reporting and monitoring mechanisms about indigenous peoples' right to communication as a condition towards free and informed prior consent and self-determined development.

IV. United Nations Development Programme

38. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held its first in-depth dialogue with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on 22 May 2009. The in-depth dialogue was the first of its kind, and the Permanent Forum welcomes the UNDP participation and expresses its appreciation for the detailed report submitted by the Programme (E/C.19/2009/3/Add.5).[4]

39. The Permanent Forum posed a broad range of questions to UNDP related to the following issues:

[4] For a detailed narrative of the in-depth dialogue, see the summary prepared by the Department of Public Information (HR/4986), available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/hr4986.doc.htm.

(a) The role of UNDP in the light of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

(b) UNDP policies and procedures and their impact on programming with, and for, indigenous peoples;

(c) UNDP region/country-specific initiatives on indigenous peoples' issues, including the Regional Indigenous Peoples' Programme in Asia;

(d) The internal capacity of UNDP to effectively address indigenous peoples' issues;

(e) The inclusion of indigenous peoples' issues in human development reports and national Millennium Development Goals reports;

(f) The role of UNDP in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries and its potential impact on indigenous peoples;

(g) The Global Environmental Facility of UNDP, in particular the Small Grants Programme and community-based adaptation initiatives under the facility;

(h) The role of UNDP in inter-agency cooperation on indigenous peoples' issues.

Observations on the dialogue

40. The Permanent Forum has enjoyed a fruitful partnership with UNDP. As new challenges emerge, the partnership between United Nations agencies and indigenous peoples needs to be further strengthened.

41. The Permanent Forum commends the UNDP Regional Indigenous Peoples' Programme in Asia for its sustained contribution to the implementation of indigenous peoples' rights in that region.

42. The Permanent Forum commends the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean for actively engaging with indigenous peoples throughout the region.

43. The Permanent Forum commends the Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme for its ongoing support for indigenous peoples' organizations.

Concluding recommendations

44. The Permanent Forum makes the following recommendations to UNDP with a view to strengthening its work on indigenous peoples' issues in the years to come and ensuring that it remains faithful to its mandate on human development.

45. The Permanent Forum greatly welcomes the new global indigenous peoples' partnership initiative that UNDP is developing with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and OHCHR to promote the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention No. 169. The Permanent Forum hopes to support that initiative, working in cooperation with other actors, by providing advice during the initial phase as well as throughout the process.

46. In order to fully address the fact that indigenous peoples lag behind in terms of the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, it will be necessary for UNDP to strengthen its policies to integrate human rights and indigenous peoples' issues into all projects that affect indigenous peoples, in particular with regard to strategies and tools aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

47. The Permanent Forum is very concerned that indigenous peoples continue to report difficulties in participating in UNDP projects and engaging with UNDP offices. The Forum recommends that UNDP improve access to information on the Programme for indigenous peoples and ensure easier access to its staff members in country offices. UNDP should promote mechanisms that ensure a constructive and institutionalized dialogue between indigenous peoples and United Nations country teams at the country level, for example, by establishing advisory boards composed of indigenous representatives who can bring their perspectives to United Nations programming processes and policies.

48. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNDP utilize the expertise of Permanent Forum members by keeping them informed of programmes and projects involving indigenous peoples within their areas of responsibility and obtaining their input and involvement on proposed projects and subsequent implementation.

49. The Permanent Forum observes that UNDP projects focused on indigenous peoples' issues are few in number and dispersed, and constitute a very small fraction in the overall UNDP portfolio. This is a serious concern, as indigenous peoples are lagging behind in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and continue to face marginalization and exclusion. The Permanent Forum therefore recommends that UNDP allocate additional resources for projects that are focused on indigenous peoples' issues and rights, including strengthening the regional programme in Asia and establishing new regional programmes in Latin America and Africa.

50. The Permanent Forum urges UNDP to enhance its own capacity in the area of indigenous peoples' issues by ensuring sufficient expertise and human resources, in particular at the headquarters level, but also in its regional centres, including regional policy advisers on indigenous peoples' issues who are able to provide adequate support to country offices.

51. In order to enhance its capacity, first-hand understanding and leadership in the area of indigenous peoples' issues, the Permanent Forum strongly recommends that UNDP establish training programmes similar to the Leadership Development Programme and junior professional programmes focused on attracting indigenous professionals or incorporate an indigenous component in existing programmes.

52. The Permanent Forum commends the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean for starting a regional initiative building on the Programme's experience in Asia. The Forum recommends that that initiative be consolidated and that the Regional Bureau implement a regional programme to ensure cross-fertilization of good practices among countries and coherent policy approaches. The Forum encourages the Regional Bureau to strengthen its capacity and, together with the Inter-Agency Support Group, looks forward to supporting those efforts through specialized training workshops for United Nations country teams.

53. The Permanent Forum recommends that a capacity-development component be included in UNDP projects that affect indigenous peoples. The Forum also recommends that the experience and knowledge of the Small Grants Programme of the Global Environmental Facility be utilized by other small-grant schemes and that a stronger link be developed between efforts to enhance the capacity of indigenous peoples' organizations and UNDP efforts to enhance the participation of indigenous peoples in national policy processes.

54. The Permanent Forum urges UNDP to further strengthen the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples by choosing indigenous peoples' organizations as their implementing partners and responsible parties in their projects involving indigenous peoples, especially those with established track records in project implementation. As a corollary to the foregoing, government agencies created to promote and protect the rights and interests of indigenous peoples should be preferred as implementing partners in UNDP programming on indigenous peoples' issues so that they can effectively perform their mandate.

V. United Nations Population Fund

55. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held an in-depth dialogue with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on 26 May 2009 as part of its new working methods during the eighth session. The Permanent Forum welcomes the participation of UNFPA and expresses its appreciation for the detailed and informative report submitted by the Fund on its activities in support of indigenous peoples' issues in recent years, in particular its work in addressing indigenous women's rights and reproductive rights (E/C.19/2009/3).[5]

56. The Permanent Forum posed a broad range of questions to UNFPA, addressing the following key issues:

(a) The impact of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the work of UNFPA;

(b) The impact of political conditions on the Fund's opportunities to advance indigenous women's rights;

(c) The integration of traditional knowledge and culturally sensitive approaches to health services in the countries in which UNFPA is active;

(d) The Fund's role in the empowerment of indigenous women's organizations and networks;

(e) UNFPA contributions to data collection, dissemination and use of such data;

(f) The Fund's role in HIV/AIDS prevention among indigenous peoples, in particular young people;

(g) UNFPA integration of indigenous peoples into its poverty-reduction efforts.

[5] For a detailed narrative of the in-depth dialogue, see the summary prepared by the Department of Public Information (HR/4986), available at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2009/hr4986.doc.htm.

Observations on the dialogue

57. The Permanent Forum recognizes that UNFPA has been an important partner for it, as well as an active participant in the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. The Permanent Forum congratulates UNPFA for its important role in advancing indigenous women's human rights and reproductive health, including its efforts to reduce maternal mortality and to empower indigenous women to advocate for their own reproductive rights.

58. The Permanent Forum commends UNFPA for its intensified efforts to promote and mainstream a culturally sensitive approach into its programmes at the global, regional and national levels, in line with the recommendations of the Permanent Forum. The Permanent Forum notes with appreciation the Fund's promotion of intercultural health models. UNFPA intercultural approaches in Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Panama, Mexico, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Ecuador, stressing the leadership role of indigenous women at the national and regional levels, were highlighted during the in-depth dialogue at the eighth session of the Forum.

59. The Permanent Forum commends UNFPA for its emphasis on the participation of indigenous women in its programmes. The Fund's approach in this regard during the dialogue was summed up by the phrase "Nothing about you without you". The Permanent Forum also notes with appreciation UNFPA efforts to strengthen indigenous women's networks in South America.

60. The Permanent Forum commends UNFPA for its efforts at the regional and country levels to collect disaggregated data and develop and disseminate quantitative and qualitative studies on the situation of indigenous peoples, focusing particularly on the rights of indigenous women and girls and its efforts in several countries to ensure that indigenous issues are adequately reflected in national censuses. The Permanent Forum also welcomes the Fund's promotion of the collection and use of disaggregated data to support Governments in designing and implementing policies and programmes that tackle inequities and benefit vulnerable populations. The Permanent Forum shares the concern of UNFPA that gaps in information collected in demographic surveys can mask discrepancies in progress among indigenous peoples (for example, while poverty rates may decline within a particular country, they may remain higher among indigenous peoples in comparison with the general population).

Concluding recommendations

61. The Permanent Forum notes with appreciation the active engagement of UNFPA with indigenous peoples in the regions of Latin America and Asia, as well as its detailed reporting on its work in these areas. The Permanent Forum invites UNFPA to continue reporting on its work and recommends that future reports deal with agency activities in all sociocultural regions or, if no relevant activities are under way in a particular region, the challenges to addressing indigenous issues in such regions.

62. The Permanent Forum commends UNFPA for its financial and technical support for strengthening national capacity for censuses, surveys and needs assessments, and for its focus on the 2010 round of censuses, the results of which

will be critical for assessing progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNFPA vigorously promote the inclusion of indigenous peoples in the 2010 round of censuses, particularly in cases where Governments may seek to avoid questions pertaining to indigenous peoples.

63. The Permanent Forum commends UNFPA for its efforts to build staff capacity on indigenous peoples' issues and recommends that such efforts continue, together with efforts to recruit indigenous peoples where possible.

64. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNFPA continue its work in support of the participation of indigenous women in regional and national consultations, including training and other capacity-building programmes.

VI. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

65. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held an in-depth dialogue with the following six divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat: the Division for Sustainable Development; the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests; the Division for Public Administration and Development Management; the Statistics Division; the Division for the Advancement of Women; and the Division for Social Policy and Development, which hosts the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

66. The in-depth dialogue was held on 22 May 2009 as part of the new working methods of the Permanent Forum during its eighth session. The Permanent Forum welcomes the participation of the six divisions, and expresses its appreciation for the detailed and informative report submitted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on its activities in support of indigenous peoples (E/C.19/2009/3/Add.4).

67. The Permanent Forum posed questions to the six divisions addressing a number of issues, including the following:

(a) The impact of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the divisions' activities and overall direction, including technical cooperation;

(b) The divisions' contribution towards the empowerment of indigenous peoples' organizations and networks, including indigenous women's organizations and networks;

(c) The contributions of major groups to discussions and decision-making on issues related to forest policy and sustainable forest management;

(d) Improving and increasing major group and stakeholder participation, including of indigenous peoples, during the future work of the divisions;

(e) Measures adopted to improve the identification of indigenous peoples in the upcoming 2010 round of censuses, including the full participation of indigenous peoples in that process;

(f) The mainstreaming of statistical issues pertaining to indigenous peoples when developing handbooks and guidelines;

(g) Assessing the impact of indigenous women as the target group in technical cooperation projects;

(h) Incorporating the perspectives of indigenous young people.

Observations on the dialogue

68. The Permanent Forum notes that the divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs facilitate participation of indigenous peoples in multi-stakeholder dialogues held in the context of intergovernmental processes. In particular, the Division for Sustainable Development and the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests work closely with indigenous peoples' organizations to facilitate their active participation in the multi-stakeholder dialogues convened at each session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Forum on Forests. The Permanent Forum also notes that the multi-year work programme of the Forum on Forests includes activities relating to indigenous peoples in 2011. The Division for the Advancement of Women facilitates the participation of indigenous women in high-level round tables and expert panels of the Commission on the Status of Women, which continues to address the situation of indigenous women in relation to the themes and issues considered at its sessions.

69. The Permanent Forum notes that the divisions strive to include indigenous peoples in policy development and decision-making. During the 10-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Commission on the Status of Women, responding to the calls of indigenous peoples, adopted a resolution calling for measures to address the concerns of indigenous women throughout the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Platform and for the full participation of indigenous women in all aspects of society. The secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which is hosted by the Division for Social Policy and Development, is a vehicle by means of which indigenous peoples are able to participate in policy development. Furthermore, the World Public Sector Report 2008, produced by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, highlighted innovative local government practices, featuring the experience of two cities in Ecuador which are managed by indigenous mayors on the basis of a cross-cultural participatory approach.

70. The Permanent Forum commends the efforts made to include indigenous peoples in statistics and disaggregated data. As the Permanent Forum has pointed out, data collection and disaggregation concerning indigenous peoples poses unique challenges. The latest version of the United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, produced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, elaborates the need to disaggregate statistics on the basis of ethnocultural characteristics, especially with respect to indigenous populations. The Statistics Division, as part of its series of special topics, collected, processed and disseminated data on ethno-cultural characteristics as available in the 2000 census round, complementing it with the set of questions used in national censuses to capture the data in the various categories.

71. In this regard, the Permanent Forum notes with appreciation the recommendation of the United Nations Statistics Commission that all countries undertake at least one national census on population and housing during the period 2005-2014 and that field work be conducted on existing social structures, including

indigenous peoples' communities. In addition, the Commission's guidelines clearly state that all questionnaires must be translated into all languages, including all indigenous peoples' languages, that indigenous peoples be recruited to conduct questionnaires in order to ensure that responses in national censuses are of a high quality and that technical support staff work with indigenous elders to ensure that indigenous peoples understand the census process and that their issues are addressed.

72. With regard to other issues affecting indigenous peoples, the Permanent Forum commends the Division for the Advancement of Women for including indigenous women in its database on violence against women, which was launched in March 2009, as well as highlighting the needs of indigenous girls in education programmes aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, and for focusing on rural indigenous women in its 2007 report and in discussions on climate change addressing indigenous women's vulnerability.

73. The Permanent Forum commends the Division for Sustainable Development for its initiative to select indigenous peoples' organizations to conduct fieldwork and data compilation for the Division and for the fact that national data indicators on indigenous peoples are available in the Division's national recording mechanisms and country profiles. The Permanent Forum also takes note of fact that the Division for Sustainable Development has hosted side events that inform indigenous peoples about how they can be involved in the Division's work and that a special study on indigenous peoples in Africa has been conducted.

74. The Permanent Forum notes that the Division for Public Administration and Development Management conducted work on indigenous peoples' civic participation and offered online training for Governments on the rights of indigenous peoples, commencing with the development of various governance indicators, as they pertained to indigenous people. Furthermore, as indigenous women constitute a special group within indigenous societies and are thus especially disadvantaged, it is important that they be a target group.

75. The Permanent Forum notes that the mainstreaming of indigenous peoples' issues within the Division for Social Policy and Development followed the Permanent Forum's policy messages that focused attention on indigenous women on various fronts, such as awareness-raising, an issue with regard to which the secretariat of the Permanent Forum has worked with women's organizations, including in 2004 at a high-level panel of the Commission on the Status of Women on women's role in conflict resolution. In the area of operational activities, the Division for Social Policy and Development, in conjunction with other United Nations bodies, established a working group which focused on indigenous women's issues within the United Nations system.

76. The Permanent Forum commends its secretariat for being part of the committee that prepared the United Nations Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, which incorporates tenets of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' and has been disseminated to all United Nations country teams.

77. The Permanent Forum notes that in supporting indigenous youth, the Indigenous Youth Caucus has been a consistent voice at the sessions of the

Permanent Forum, while the United Nations Programme on Youth has dedicated a chapter of its 2009 report to the theme "Indigenous youth and climate change".

Concluding recommendations

78. The Permanent Forum recommends that each of six divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (the Division for Sustainable Development; the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests; the Division for Public Administration and Development Management; the Statistics Division; the Division for the Advancement of Women; and the Division for Social Policy and Development, which hosts the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues) be mindful of the fact that indigenous peoples' issues need greater attention, that indigenous peoples' rights as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples should be implemented, that indigenous peoples be given a decisive voice in formulating policies affecting their communities, lands and resources and that there be facilitation of indigenous peoples' participation in multi-stakeholder dialogues within the intergovernmental processes and in technical cooperation programmes supported by the divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.